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ABSTRACT

Two meetings of the International Federation of Library Associations Section of Libraries for the Blind (BLISTA) are summarized. The first was an expert meeting which was held in Marburg/Lahn, Federal Republic of Germany, in August 1983. Participants included 51 librarians and technical experts serving blind and physically disabled individuals in 15 countries. The presentations, which are briefly described, discussed the work of BLISTA and its structures, tactile maps and technology for constructing tactual media, the blind and new technologies, talking book libraries in the Federal Republic of Germany, paperless Braille, UNESCO/IFLA contracts relating to Braille production in Africa, the state of blindness in the third world, and the Van Schyndel Voice Indexing System. The second summary describes membership meetings and standard committee meetings held in Munich in August 1983. Presentations at the Munich meetings focused on library services in Poland and in West Germany, and new technologies. Reports of an action/reporting meeting and standing committees are also summarized. (LMM)

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SUMMARY

of the

Expert Meeting
Section of Libraries for the Blind
International Federation of Library Asscciations
Marburg/Lahn
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY
August 17-19, 1983

and the

Membership Meetings
Standing Committee Meeting
Section of Libraries for the Blind
International Federation of Library Associations
Munich
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY
August 21-27, 1983

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EXPERT MEETING

Marburg/Lahn

August 17-19, 1983

INTRODUCTION

The Deutsche Blindenstudienanstalt (BLISTA), Marburg/Lahn, Federal Republic of Germany, was the location of an August 17-19, 1983, meeting of 51 librarians and technical experts from 15 countries serving blind and physically handicapped individuals. The participants met under the auspices of the Section of Libraries for the Blind, International Federation of Library Associations. The three-day agenda included nine technical sessions and three professional tours.

At 9:30 a.m. on August 17 Jurgen Hertlein, Director, BLISTA, welcomed the participants and described work of the German Institute for the Blind--known familiarly as BLISTA. Director Hertlein indicated that the 65-year-old institution "in an effort to expand to all areas of blind education, extended the programs of its different departments. According to its statutes the aim of the institution is to provide the visually handicapped with possibilities for higher education, resulting in mainstreaming, performance in scientific programs and the development of technical devices. The institution works with all its branches for the professional integration of the visually handicapped into society. The German Institute for the Blind is recognized as a scientific institution of public interest and has the legal form of a non-profit foundation. Its work is humanitarian without any religious or political ties, and is a federally sanctioned organization."

Further, Director Hertlein noted the structure of BLISTA:

+ the Carl-Strehl-Schule, a State acknowledged special school for blind and low vision students (Sonderschule); it offers at the present time school education to over 230 blind and visually handicapped students. The school's branches are:

the Aufbaugymnasium, a college including the upper forms offering an AA-degree, - Fachoberschule, a professional college for social professions (Fachrichtung Sozialwesen), - Berufsfachschule, a business highschool (Berufsfeld kaufmannische Berufe) and courses of rehabilitation for the recently blinded (Rehabilitationskurse),

+ it will by its boarding-school conception with three levels enable its pupils to attain independence step by step. First in central housing groups - Zentrale Wohngruppen - for students from the age of 12 to 15 years, who live together in groups of ten. Then eight to ten boys and girls live outside the school in an Aubenwohngruppe, a living situation destined for pupils from 15 to 18 years. As adults these students move to independent groups - Selbstandige Wohngruppen - in the different districts of the town of Marburg. It also:

+ arranges in its Center of Mobility systematic training in mobility to blind and low vision students as well as instruction in living skills and handling modern technical aids.

  In this center in close collaboration with the Philipps-University in Marburg, mobility and social trainers receive their professional training. The center serves applicants of all German speaking countries

+ with its Emil-Kruckmann-Library (about 53,000 volumes in Braille the institute offers books at no cost covering all

scientific and literary fields as well as novels to readers in Germany and abroad

+ with its Documentation Services (AIDOS) the institute aids everyone in finding information concerning anything in the field of the blind and low vision

+ with its Reference Library of printed books the institute helps in research

+ the Braille Publishing House publishes and prints in Braille schoolbooks, scientific literature, novels, law-compendiums and magazines

+ the institute produces and distributes with its Department of Fabrication-Contruction - Control and Development

  Braillers - slates - Braille-printers and duplication machines for Braille texts - normal typewriters with additional devices for the blind - office material - writing material for the blind and normal sighted - drawing devices and drawing material - calculation aids - measuring devices - Audilux and accessories - clocks and watches - canes - arm bands and other traffic safety material - television converters - tape recorders and cassettes - reading aids - games - maps etc.

Director Hertlein said, "Such products are exported to more than 80 countries all over the world. The Institute for the Blind also distributes aids from other origins."

In conclusion, Director Hertlein noted that BLISTA is an associated member of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind (WCWB) and takes part in the general assemblies as well as in conferences of the European Regional Committee. It belongs to the International Federation of the Blind (IFE). It participates in the activities of the International Council for Education of the Visually Handicapped (ICEVH). Furthermore it is represented as a member of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)." He also said, "The aim of the German Institute for the Blind is the mainstreaming of the visually handicapped into the world of the sighted by means of instruction, as well as production and further development of aids of all kinds."

In response to questions Director Hertlein noted that his position regarding braille could be determined from a reading of the paper Does the Braille Book Have a Future?[1/]

TOURS

Tours of the BLISTA Braille Printing House and Talking Book Library followed. The sophisticated braille facility was observed with interest. Especial attention was directed to the Marburg Stereotyper and the Thiel Braille-Zentrum. It was noted that 60 books in 50 copies were produced each year and that 6 braille magazines in quantities ranging from 100 to 750 copies were published on a regular basis. Reiner Schwarzbach served as the tour guide.

Following lunch a visit to the recently constructed BLISTA

1/ Hertlein, Jurgen. Does the Braille Book Have a Future? Technical Conference, Triest, June 24-26, 1983. Available on request to Jurgen Hertlein, Director, German Institute for the Blind (BLISTA), D-3550 Marburg/Lahn, Federal Republic of Germany.

production plant in Wehrda was held. There attention was directed to all aspects of braille related machine manufacturing and the unique apprentice training program. New plastic braille slates were demonstrated as was a new braillewriter.

On return to Marburg/Lahn the group toured the centrally located showroom and exposition of aids and appliances for visually impaired persons at Ketzerbach 25.

TACTILE MAPS

On Thursday morning Hans Doove, The Netherlands Library for the Blind, coordinated a meeting addressed by Wilfred Laufenberg, BLISTA, and Paulli Thomsen, Danish State Institute for the Blind.

Dr. Laufenberg, Diplom-Psychologe, introduced his paper by stating that: "We must always be aware that the haptic sense is much less sensitive, much more "coarse" so to say than the human eye is. Not only is it necessary to use larger scale to gain a minimum size of symbols and a minimum distance between separate symbols in order to make them tactually perceptable and discriminable. But also in terms of cognition, we must pay attention to some important differences betweeen vision and the haptic sense. Tactual information must be structured in quite a different way to be easily and correctly understood. A most evident example: colours cannot be used as discriminative factors when constructing tactual materials but must be replaced by factors of height and shape of symbols and by differing textures of surfaces."

He also stressed that: "We should be flexible in choosing the adequate technology of constructing tactual media depending on the kind and complexity of information that is to be presented. The range of possibly

fitting techniques reaches from quick and easy illustrations for instance with the mag-stix-kit in mobility-training to technically complicated silk-screen-printings for book editions and atlases. The number of copies that are to be produced is an important criterion - besides others - for this decision, because the costs involved in different technologies differ as well. Small editions simply cannot be produced by too complicated and expensive means."

In summary the speaker said: "The most reknown technique in producing master-pieces for thermo-copying is constructing them by handwork. Glueing diverse materials together (such as the Nottingham Kit For Making Raised Maps contains) is a technique well-accustomed to every mobility trainer and teacher of the blind, which can also be used when editing large series of tactual materials.

"Some more skill is required for working with aluminum sheets or plates, embossing them to relief pictures of nearly any shape and height extension. Pouring them out with plaster you obtain solid masters for many copies. - - - Other techniques to form masters for vacuum-copying require photomechanical equipment. A technology used at the Blindenstudienanstalt is producing so-called "Nyloprint" newspaper printing plates: As a first step you need a clean black and white drawing of the later relief that shows every dot, line or area that has to become raised in black colour on white ground. This drawing is photographed on a negative film. Magnification or reduction is possible during this step of the procedure. The film negative is then used for exposing a 'Nyloprint' printing plate to ultra violet light that hardens the surface of the plate at those parts where the film negative lets the light pass through. By alcohol (and as a new development even by water) the parts of the plate not exposed to light can be washed away."

He then indicated that there is a second group of technologies that concerns "ways of producing large series of tactual reliefs without master-pieces by photocopying- or printing-processes." He cited the newly developed Minolta stereo-copying process which translates black and white drawings into tactually legible reliefs by a special paper used. "This paper "blows up," that means expands, when exposed to heat. A normally taken photo-copy on this paper absorbs heat at its blackened parts and reflects heat at its white parts, so that the expanding reaction of heat and paper takes place only at the black parts of the copy."

"A comparable technology developed by the Blindenstudienanstalt is the OTAC-system, even if a technically different way was chosen: A normal photo-copy on normal paper is taken from a black and white original. Differing from the normal photo-copying procedure, the toner on the paper is not fixed by heat. In a second unit of the OTAC-machine the paper runs through, the toner gets mixed with fine quartz powder. In the next step, toner and quartz powder get altogether fixed to the paper by heat, so that in the end, the quartz sand on the paper is tactually recognizable.

Both, stereo-copying and OTAC-technology have advantages used to produce simple dot-and-line-drawings but show disadvantages with complicated illustrations: both are only capable of showing symbols of only one standard height, so that the tactual height dimension is spared out for discrimination of symbols.

For purposes of giving complex tactual information, a better solution is obtainable by silk-screen-printing.

Dr. Laufenberg concluded his remarks by discussing the use of colors on tactual maps.

Paulli Thomsen brought the attendees up to date with progress on

the International Register of Maps project being developed by the Section of Libraries for the Blind, IFLA. The register will be located in the Netherlands Library for the Blind, based upon input received from an international questionnaire. If plans hold, the register will be available for consultation in early 1984.

PAPERLESS BRAILLE

Peter Ditz, Tape Aids for the Blind, Durban, South Africa, introduced Manfred Harres, Production Coordinator, BLISTA, who presented a paper titled "The Blind and the New Technologies: Paperless-Braille and Reading Machines.' Mr. Harres began his presentation by saying: 'Before talking to you about new technologies, microprocessors, data-carriers, etc., let's have a look at the brailling of a page with a Braille slate. A sighted person first would read the text. Afterwards the text is mentally translated into Braille by the transcriber and then embossed on paper with the stylus. These three work-steps of text editing translation or code conversion and storage on paper or zinc plates, can be found in Braille production by means of a sheet brailler or any Braille stereotyper. I have placed this retrospective view of familiar production methods at the beginning of the actual topic, since this simultaneous work process, especially in connection with the use of new technologies in Braille production, is divided into text editing, translation and storage. Today, there exists a wide range of devices and systems for each of these three work-steps, which all take place in or around the computer. In connection with these three work-steps, I will also introduce some new devices and show how I imagine these new systems can be combined in the future."

The paper was comprehensive and addressed editing, automatic

translation, as well as on-line and off-line operation systems. He concluded with a perspective on the future: 'A blind person would like to borrow a book which is not available in Braille. He calls a central library, the book is available there in inkprint. There is no data-carrier on which the same book is stored. The book can be read in the library by means of an automatic reading machine. The data edited in the library's computer are then entered into the blind person's personal computer via telephone. The blind person can get the text translated into Braille Grade 2 with his personal computer. He first reads the book on his tactile display. Then he can print the whole book or parts of it on his electric sheet brailler."

A spirited open discussion ensued.

TALKING BOOKS

Mrs. Winnie Vitzansky, Deputy Director, State Library and Printing House for the Blind in Copenhagen, Denmark, introduced Karl Britz, Graduate Physical Scientist and Teacher for the Blind, BLISTA, who reviewed "Talking Book Libraries in the Federal Republic of Germany.' In introduction Mr. Britz said: "During the war engineers of the German AEG company had developed the magnetic tape recording technique up to the point that it could be used for studio recordings, and in the post-war years American manufacturers made it available for home and hobby. In 1949 a braille library in Switzerland started experimenting with recordings on magnetic wire and in 1952 Dr. Carl Strehl, the director of the Blindenstudienanstalt in Marburg, organized a conference with the sole objective of examining all of the technological possibilities available at that time for producing a talking book. The record-disk, however, was not a subject of the discussion, but a similar mechanical technique

(Tefifon) which used an endless plastic tape. Finally, another question to be answered was the way in which the magnetic tape technique should be used: either in a system developed especially for this usage, as for example, the closed cassette system developed by the Royal National Institute for the Blind, or simply to use one of the systems being offered by the commercial producers on the general market.

"The second way was chosen. The "reader" of the talking book could listen to the tapes on an apparatus which he had to buy for his own use and which he could use, on the other hand, for his own recordings.

"The first German talking book library was founded in 1954 here in Marburg and several other libraries followed shortly afterwards in various cities. They organized a federation of talking libraries in Germany which was soon joined by a number of foreign libraries (Austria, Switzerland, France, Holland, Luxemborg, and Sweden) also offering German literature to their listeners. At present there are 19 non-profit institutions who belong to the federation and coordinate their work."

Mr. Britz expanded on current efforts and provided recent statistics:

Federation of talking book libraries for the blind:

		1980	1981
New Recordings.....	inland	2,928	3,037
	foreign	3,186	3,499
	total	6,114	6,536
Complete Stock.....	inland	27,961	31,007
	foreign	64,146	67,789
	total	92,107	98,886
Copies Lent Out.....	inland	489,527	538,821
	foreign	861,080	846,607
	total	1,350,607	1,385,428
Tapes, Cassettes Lent Out.....	inland	2,494,901	2,836,951
	foreign	4,837,458	5,745,050
	total	7,332,359	7,882,001

		1980	1981
Listeners.....	inland	37,559	38,294
	foreign	19,755	20,008
	total	57,314	58,302

Central catalogue: at present approximately 17,000 titles

Increment in 1980: 980 and in 1981: 964

The data are valid for 12 inland and 6 foreign or a total of 18 libraries

BRAILLE PRODUCTION IN AFRICA

Following lunch in the BLISTA dining hall Frank Kurt Cylke, Director, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., U.S.A., and Rainer Witte, Deputy Director, BLISTA, led a discussion of UNESCO/IFLA contracts relating to braille production in Africa.

Mr. Witte stated that: "Valuable insights were gained from two previous UNESCO-sponsored activities in the last few years, which have thus become determinating for the aims and objectives of the present study.

- 1979 "African Braille Production. A Statistical Review and Evaluation of Countries and Costs" by Marc Mayer & Frank Kurt Cylke (UNESCO contract No. 594560)

- 1980 Seminar on Library Service to the Visually Handicapped in African Developing Countries. Arusha, Tanzania, 3-11 November 1980

"Two papers came from this seminar that was organized by Anna Ubostad, Norway, and Paulli Thomsen, Denmark:

- The "Final Report" (UNESCO No. PGI - 81/WS/21)
- " Supplement to the Report" on the seminar

He also noted that Barry Hampshire, Sweden, had published Establishing Braille Production Facilities in Developing Countries. A Handbook. 1980 which proved useful."

Mr. Witte then outlined the current UNESCO/IFLA contract:

1. The purpose:

The aim of the study is an inquiry into the feasibility of setting up unit(s) (word quoted as in the original text) to produce

--Braille editions of books and
--reaching material for the visually handicapped;

that is for: visually handicapped

--children,
--young people, and
--adults in Africa.

The languages to be taken into account are

--vernaculars, as well as
--foreign languages.

The investigation has:

--to identify and evaluate the facilities for Braille production and should find out which countries have positive possibilities of producing Braille texts

--to investigate the "status quo" of Braille publishing and to evaluate the estimated amount and type of additional material required

--to analyse the capacity of existing presses and their potential for production expansion

--to provide practical suggestions and recommendations as to the location, training, staffing and equipment and materials, e.g., required for the creation of unit(s) to serve national or multinational needs, as well as cost estimate for the establishment of the unit(s) and an investigation of possible financing sources.

2. The problems:

--Which of the African states should be considered (those bordering on the Mediterranean - Black Africa - Southern African States - states recognized/not recognized by the United Nations (UN))?

--How to organize the work in such a way as to give the people concerned a say and a right of decision? And how to find personnel able and willing to tackle the job efficiently?

--How to find possible ways of locating and using resources (this task, considered by IFLA as being outside of their responsibility, will certainly be a point of major importance).

--How to fit the activities into a realistic time schedule likely to be kept.

3. Activities until now:

A time schedule has been set up. Addresses of organizations, institutions, and persons have been collected and filed. Questionnaires have been drawn up and are waiting confirmation by UNESCO, before having them transcribed into Braille for mailing (in both media: ink and Braille). Suggestions for potential members of commissions have been given consideration; first discussions will take place at Munich.

The final time schedule will be established after the 49th council which will then be issued with further details in an intermediate report to UNESCO via IFLA.

Dr. Hans-Eugen Schulze was scheduled to offer "Thoughts About the Production and Spreading of Braille in Africa." Unfortunately a scheduling conflict prohibited participation of Dr. Schulze. However, copies of his paper may be obtained on request.[2/]

THIRD WORLD

It was fortunate that Mr. Wolfgang Stein, Director, Christoffel Blindenmission e.V., F.R.G., could participate. He described the state of blindness in the third world. More than 40,000,000 blind and visually handicapped individuals exist in the world--80% in developing countries. He said

2/ Schulze, Hans-Eugen. Thoughts About the Production and Spreading of Braille in Africa. Member of Federal Supreme Court, Albert-Braun-Str. 10b, D-7500 Karlsruhe, Federal Republic of Germany.

one of 40 or one of 50 blind children in school have no access to braille materials. Mr. Stein's extensive comments stimulated discussion, moderated by Mr. Cylke, that extended for more than 60 minutes.

VOICE INDEXING DEMONSTRATION

Dr. Franco Consadori, Vancouver, Canada, concluded the day's activities by offering a demonstration of the Van Schyndel Voice Indexing System--consisting of a master unit, rotation sensing unit, and remote control unit. Dr. Consadori noted that:

"The Van Schyndel Voice Indexing System VS/VIS offers a simple and effective solution to the age old problem of searching for various sections (chapters, pages, etc.) of a voice recording on audio cassettes. This problem is common to all audio recordings, but poses special problems in the case of "talking books" for the blind. The VS/VIS was designed specifically with this application in mind.

"In the production of "talking books" a master tape is created on reel to reel audio equipment and the final product is obtained by high speed duplication onto cassettes.

"Currently the only widely accepted method for indexing "talking books" consists of the addition of audio tones (beeps) to the normal recording which can be heard when advancing the cassette in the fast forward mode. The shortcomings of this method are obvious.

"Some of the major requirements that must be met by a successful indexing system are:

1. No need of special equipment for playback.
2. Minimal interference with audio quality of the recording.

3. Ease of use in the production process (No "multiple passes," use of additional tracks or other limitations).
4. Capability of indexing both new and existing recordings.
5. Low cost and high reliability.

"The VS/VIS satisfies all of the above requirements. Its many other features make it the only real solution to the indexing problem.

"The basic principle of operation of the VS/VIS is similar to the one utilized in indexing with audio tones. State of the art technology makes it now possible to articulate the simple "beeps" into clear spoken labels: The VS/VIS captures a message; encodes and manipulates it into a special format; finally records it together with the regular text in such a way that it can only be heard in the fast forward mode."

Following a discussion and further demonstration it was announced that further information regarding the $2,000 (U.S.) machine may be obtained from: Q-VOX International Inc., 2190 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V6K 2N2, Canada (Telex 04-352848 VCK).

BUSINESS SESSION

Mrs. Judith C. Thiele, Charles Crane Memorial Library, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, closed the three-day meeting by reporting on recent administrative matters related to the Section of Libraries for the Blind, IFLA, activity.

CONCLUSION

The profitable professional experience in Marburg was supplemented by the generous hospitality offered by Director Jurgen Hertlein and the total BLISTA staff. Participants gave all hosts a unanimous vote of appreciation.

SECTION OF LIBRARIES FOR THE BLIND
IFLA

Munich

August 21-27, 1983

INTRODUCTION

Forty-three librarians and technical experts representing seventeen countries participated in meetings of the Section of Libraries for the Blind, International Federation of Library Associations in Munich, Federal Republic of Germany, during the August 21-27, 1983, IFLA 49th Council and General Conference.

On Tuesday, August 23, 1983, Bruce Massis, Library Director, Jewish Guild for the Blind, U.S.A.--acting as Chairman of the Section of Libraries for the Blind--called the first Munich meeting to order.

Georgette Kappaport, Chief Librarian, Central Library for the Hospitals, Paris, France, briefly described the activity serving blind and physically handicapped individuals in The Antony Public Library, Antony, France.

LIBRARY SERVICE IN POLAND

Mr. Massis then introduced Clifford Law, Chief Librarian, Library Services for the Handicapped, National Library of Australia, who read a paper prepared by F. Czajkowski of Torun, Poland.[3/] The paper, titled "Reading Programs for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in Public Libraries of the Polish People's Republic," offered a historical perspective and then commented upon current activities. Mr. Czajkowski said: "New directions in the development of special reading programs resulted from the mass production of books, periodicals, and special editions of newspapers on records and tapes. Under the patronage of "IFLA" (International Federation of Library Associations)

3/ Franciszek Czajkowski, Chairman, Section for the Propagation of Reading Programs for Invalids and Physically Handicapped Persons, Chrobrego Street 3, Apt. 78, 87-100 Torun, Poland.

and its specialized sections, this movement embraced a majority of countries. In Poland, reading programs increased relatively late, in 1975, when they were introduced in public libraries for the blind and physically handicapped. This increase is linked to an agreement concluded toward the end of 1975, between the Ministry of Culture and Art and the Board of Directors of the Polish Association of the Blind, concerning the collection and availability of recorded books in public libraries. This official document provides for the acquisition and dissemination of "talking books." They are produced at the recording studio in the Headquarters of the Polish Teachers Union in Warsaw. Approximately 150 titles are recorded annually for the use of public libraries, predominantly in the field of general education and of belles-lettres. Several are taken from the classic Polish and foreign literature."

He further stated that "the Section for the Propagation of Reading Programs for Invalids and Physically Handicapped Persons" distributed among regional branches of the Association of Polish Librarians and provincial libraries (a total of 49) a 14-question "Inquiry into the Organization and Activity regarding Talking Books." There was a 79% response. Despite the fact that some replies were incomplete and the subject was treated in an unsatisfactory way, on the whole the survey is a valuable study. At 35 provincial agencies there are organized sections for "Talking" books, frequently including recording studios in musical departments or in libraries. In Torun and Lublin, special technical library branches are operating. In other areas, libraries cooperate with local administrations of the Polish Teachers Association and have placed studios in community centers or in clubs. These libraries carry on library activity in the strict sense of the word, but some of them also organize educational and training ventures of a typical rehabilitation character."

He then described "the special library branch for the blind and physically handicapped which operates at the Provincial Public Library and City Library in Torun. This library evolved in 1982 from the already existing library studio. Situated on the ground floor of a historic apartment house in the center of the town, it has relatively spacious premises with easy access (no stairs). It has the standard library equipment. The collection consists of 390 talking book titles, catalogs are being prepared in print and braille, and the collection of rehabilitation and typhlological literature is under way.

In the near future, two booths will be installed with equipment for reproducing cassettes and records. Funds to buy "talking" books and tape recorders and other equipment are increasing."

Mr. Law referred all questions to Mr. Czajkowski at his previously noted address.

LIBRARY SERVICE IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Rainer F. V. Witte, Deputy Director and Head of Library Services and Braille Production, BLISTA, Marburg/Lahn, Federal Republic of Germany, offered a paper titled "Library Services for the Blind in the Federal Republic of Germany." Mr. Witte summarized activity and then noted that: "It remains a great challenge to librarians for the blind to answer the questions of--

- how to increase the offer of reading and information material
- in which form it would be most useful to make the existing literature available to the readers
- what measures have to be taken in order to reach the greatest number of visually handicapped

- where do libraries for the blind see their place within the library structure of the Federal Republic - do they wish to remain relatively well functioning autonomous institutions or do they prefer to become subordinate sections of municipal libraries?

No matter what will be the answers, they have to make sure that the outcome will be the best possible service for the blind, satisfying the specific needs of the readers we are committed to."

TECHNOLOGY

Paul E. Thiele, Librarian and Head, Charles Crane Memorial Library, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, presented comments directed to all those interested in serving the information needs of blind and physically handicapped individuals. Mr. Thiele's conclusion should prompt interested librarians to obtain a copy of his paper:

"The on-going development of new technologies for the blind and sight-impaired has good and bad aspects. For the professional charged with programming reading services for the visually impaired either in a dedicated special setting or in public or education libraries and institutions almost every new technology requires new methodology in administering, circulating, storing, packaging and dissemination. Every change requires large outlays of capital and continuing financial support. At the beginning of this paper, I complimented librarians, information science and education personnel on their positive attitudes and willingness to adapt. But I would be more than remiss not to point out and compliment the tremendous adaptability of the blind and partially-sighted themselves. Each new technology is accomplished by them at tremendous costs of learning, new skills, adapting new methods and devising new approaches. Many accomplished blind readers command several technologies,

switching with ease from talking book to braille, tactile print and computer-generated speech. The perfect reading technology for the largest number of blind people has obviously not yet been developed, although the talking book comes close as being the most widely accepted. But the fact that the blind are coping with the many methods of accessing information and ready to embrace new technologies as they are developed, should demonstrate clearly their tremendous desire to read."

ACTION/REPORTING MEETING

On Wednesday, August 24, Mr. Massis coordinated an action/reporting session. It was agreed that:

+ An "expert meeting" will be held in Amsterdam prior to the 1984 IFLA conference scheduled for Nairobi;

+ Frank Kurt Cylke, NLS/BPH, Library of Congress, U.S.A., and Peter Hanke, American Foundation for the Blind, New York City, U.S.A., will organize a Section of Libraries for the Blind 1985 meeting in coordination with the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind to the theme "Leisure Pursuits of the Blind" in cooperation with Professor Antun Lastric, Union of the Blind of Croatia, Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

+ An internationally acceptable logo will be developed by William Bryne, Royal Blind Society of New South Wales, Australia, to expedite air and surface mail delivery.

+ The IFLA Secretariat will be requested to stop accepting UNESCO funds without prior agreement from the Section of Libraries for the Blind, and, further, the IFLA Secretariat will be asked to act only as an administrative conduit rather than in a substantive manner.

+ Section of Libraries for the Blind members will participate in the International Conference on Embossed Materials for the Blind scheduled for April 1984 in Berlin, G.D.R. The invitation of Dr. Pielasch, President, Blinden-und-Sehschwachen-Verband der DDR, was was communicated by Professor Dr. Gotthard Rueckl,

Director, Zentralinstitut for Bibliothekswesen, Berlin, G.D.R. H. Doove, Library for the Blind, The Hague, Netherlands, will represent the section. A 15-point agenda was distributed as follows:

Embossed Materials

Preliminary Program:

I. Complex of topics

The present and future significance of embossed materials as a relevant medium of information.

1. Tactile representations as essential means of information
2. Physiological and psychological prerequisits for the tactile perception of reliefs
3. Requirements placed on the nature of reliefs

II. Complex of topics

Situation and trends in the demand for embossed materials for education, occupation and leisure time

4. Methods for enabling the blind to read tactile representations
5. Possibilities and limits of the use of tactile representations in training of blind pupils
6. Tactile representations as aid for the vocational training and employment
7. The use of raised-line materials for orientation and mobility
8. Reliefs as illustrations in books and journals

III. Complex of topics

Traditional and modern technologies in the production of embossed materials

9. Survey on the different relief designs and their basic principles
10. Matrices - conception and production

11. Technological processes of the relief production

12. Suitable processes for the preparation of relief representations by teachers, mobility trainers and parents

13. Special requirements placed on relief atlases and globes

IV. Complex of topics

National cataloguing and international co-ordination of the demand for embossed materials

14. Necessity, problems and results of preparing national catalogues on reliefs

15. Questions of the international coordination and proposals for the international exchangeability of reliefs

+ "Recommendations on working Out National Standards of Library Services for the Blind" will be published for free distribution by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., U.S.A., in 1983.

+ "The International Directory of Libraries for the Blind and Braille and Recorded Production Facilities," edited by Frank Kurt Cylke and Peter Hanke, will be published for IFLA by K. G. Saur, Federal Republic of Germany, 1983 at a price to be announced.

+ "A Guide to Developing Braille and Talking Book Services," edited by L. Clark, will be published for IFLA by K. G. Saur in 1983 at a price to be announced.

+ Winnie Vitzansky, State Library and Printing House for the Blind, Copenhagen, Denmark, will pursue UNESCO/IFLA contract no. 671280.3. She will carry out a study on the tools to improve the availability of materials for the blind. This includes:

—a brief summary of previous work in this area;

—a survey of lists and directories of institutions and libraries holding materials for the blind. Those lists and directories will be evaluated according to the type of information they provide on the activities concerning

availability, i.e. collections (and their catalogue) of books in braille and large prints, of talking books and other special materials for the blind, possibilities of loan, exchange, sale, reproduction upon request, etc.

--an investigation of the various means and mechanisms which might improve the availability of materials for the blind at the national and international levels, i.e., which help to make known and available to all potential users those materials. In particular, it will be investigated the pros and cons of solutions at the national, sub-regional, regional and international levels or by linguistic areas;

—suggestions for actions: how to select and implement adequate mechanisms to improve availability.

A first outline of the study will be submitted to UNESCO by 31 August 1983 and will indicate the main areas to be studied and the methodology.

A draft final report of at least 80 pages will be submitted to UNESCO by 31 December 1983.

The final report, which will incorporate comments received by UNESCO, will be submitted no later than 29 February 1984. It will be suitable for photographic reproduction.

STANDING COMMITTEE

On Friday, August 26, the Section of Libraries for the Blind held a meeting of their Standing Committee. Mrs. Winnie Vitzansky assumed the position of Chairman and Mrs. Judith Thiele the position of Secretary.

Frank Kurt Cylke will continue to serve as Executive Secretary.

Mrs. Vitzansky thanked her predecessor, Bruce Massis, and cited new opportunities and challenges.

The following was accomplished:

+ Agreement was reached that the Chairman will request the IFLA Secretariat not to hold meetings in countries not open to all IFLA participants.

+ The following will be Invited Observers, with no vote, to the Standing Committee:

    G. Ankobia, Ghana
    W. Byrne, Australia
    P. Ditz, South Africa
    F. Hebert, Canada
    A. Lastric, Yugoslavia
    P. Thomsen, Denmark
    R. Witte, Federal Republic of Germany
    D. Zharkov, U.S.S.R.

+ The following expert consultants were appointed:

    Expert Consultant
    G. Ankobia, Ghana

    Expert Legal Consultant
    P. Ditz, South Africa

    Expert Braille Consultant
    R. Witte, Federal Republic of Germany

+ A planning committee for the 1984 Antwerp "Expert Meeting" was established:

    H. Fidder (Chairman)
    H. Doove
    R. Volz
    T. van der Greft
    W. Vitzansky

  Topics to be addressed in Antwerp will be:

    Automation
    Public Library Cooperation
    Braille production techniques

+ Sofia Palamiotou, Greece, and representatives from Japan will develop a plan for the production of IFLA conference materials in braille and/or recorded form.

+ The International Federation of the Blind will be invited to participate in Section of Libraries for the Blind meetings as will representatives of all appropriate national blind and physically handicapped user groups.

The meeting was closed with regret and anticipation of a full working year.